

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BANGUI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KIGALI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 130768

FOL RPT KINSHASA 5213 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ALGIERS BRUSSELS
BRAZZAVILLE BUKAVU CAPE TOWN DAR ES SALAAM JIDDA HAVANA LAGOS
LISBON LUBUMBASHI LUSAKA MOSCOW PARIS PEKING RABAT TRIPOLI
USUN NATO USCINCEUR SECDEF USICA USCINCRD MAY 23, 1978.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 5213

DEPT ALSO FOR A/SY/OPS/FO/AF

DEPT PASS PEACE CORPS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PINS, CASC, CC

SUBJECT: SHABA ATTACK - SITREP 9 (MAY 23, 1977)

1. STATUS OF AMERICAN CITIZENS. NO CHANGE

2. MILITARY SITUATION.

A. BELGIAN BITTERNESS OVER THE FRENCH ROLE IN
KOLWEZI MAY BE A FACTOR IN THE CHARGES MADE BY TWO BELGIAN OFFICERS
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THAT FRENCH PARAS KILLED SIX EUROPEANS DURING THEIR RECAPTURE
OF THE CITY. FIVE RHODESIANS AND ONE BELGIAN WERE REPORTEDLY
SHOT WHEN THEY FAILED TO PRODUCE IDENTIFICATION PAPERS. THE
BELGIAN FORCES, HAVING SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE EVACUATION
OF EUROPEANS FROM KOLWEZI, BEGAN RETURNING TO KAMINA AT 1400Z
MAY 22. THEIR DEPARTURE FROM KAMINA FOR BRUSSELS IS SCHEDULED
TO BEGIN AT 1400Z MAY 23. ONE BELGIAN BATTALION IS EXPECTED TO

REMAIN FOR THE TIME BEING.

B. THE GOZ IS NOW CONCERNED THAT FLNC TROOP CONCENTRATIONS NEAR TSHIKAPA (0624S/2047E) MAY FORESHADOW AN OFFENSIVE THERE.

3. TROOP DEPLOYMENT.

A. HOSTILE FORCES. INITIAL REPORTS FROM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA THAT THE FLNC CONVOY HAD BEEN SPOTTED BY ZAMBIANS NEAR SAKEJI, ZAMBIA, WERE NOT SUBSTANTIATED WHEN A EUROPEAN MISSIONARY INSPECTED THE ROAD REBEL TRUCKS HAD SUPPOSEDLY USED.

B. FRIENDLY FORCES. THERE ARE WIDESPREAD RUMORS IN LUBUMBASHI THAT THE GOZ HAS ALREADY EXECUTED THE ENTIRE FAZ GENERAL STAFF BASED IN KOLWEZI FOR THEIR COMPLICITY IN THE FLNC CAPTURE OF THAT CITY. THE ATROCITIES ATTRIBUTED TO THE FLNC ARE VIEWED BY MANY ZAIRIANS IN SHABA AND KINSHASA AS MORE LIKELY TO HAVE BEEN THE WORK OF FAZ.

A SMALL NUMBER OF MOROCCAN TROOPS HAS ARRIVED IN KINSHASA. THEIR MISSION IS AS YET UNCLEAR.

4. INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION.

A. ALTHOUGH THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN KINSHASA IS CALM ON THE SURFACE, SOME INCREASED TENSION IS EVIDENT AMONG THE EUROPEANS AND ZAIRIAN POPULATIONS. THE FRENCH AND BELGIAN SCHOOLS WERE CLOSED MAY 22, ZAIRIAN GENDARMES CONDUCTED SEARCHES OF EXPATRIATE AND ZAIRIAN APARTMENTS THAT MORNING. THE POLICE CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO LOOK FOR WEAPONS, PEOPLE WITHOUT REGULAR PAPERS AND CONFIDENTIAL

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LUNDA TRIBESMEN. THEY APPARENTLY SEARCHED BOTH ZAIRIANS AND EXPATRIATES INDISCRIMINATELY. OUR LOCAL LIAISON WITH THE GENDARMERIE WAS TOLD BY KINSHASA'S POLICE CHIEF THAT THESE SEARCHES OF APARTMENTS IN GOMBE ZONE (A NEIGHBORHOOD INHABITED PRIMARILY BY EUROPEANS AND WEALTHY ZAIRIANS) WERE ORDERED BY THE URBAN COMMISSIONER (MAY) OF KINSHASA. HE HAD NO EXPLANATION WHY THE SEARCHES HAD BEEN ORDERED OR WHY THEY WERE SPECIFICALLY RESTRICTED TO APARTMENTS.

B. THE SITUATION IN THE POORER SECTIONS OF KINSHASA (THE CITE) IS UNEASY. REPORTS THAT THE POLICE ARE SEEKING OUT LUNDA TRIBESMEN, ANGOLANS AND WEAPONS HAVE WIDE CIRCULATION. IMPRESSION INTO THE ARMY APPEARS TO BE UNDERWAY.

C. THERE ARE INDICATIONS OF STRONG ANTI-FRENCH SENTIMENT AMONG SOME ELEMENTS OF THE ZAIRIAN COMMUNITY. THIS FEELING STEMS FROM THE CONCLUSION DRAWN BY MANY ZAIRIANS THAT FRENCH INTERVENTION IN KOLWEZI WAS SOLELY AIMED AT PROTECTING MOBUTU'S REGIME. RUMORS

HAVE IT THAT MOBUTU HAS PROMISED TO REPLACE BELGIAN WITH FRENCH INTERESTS IN ZAIRE'S COPPER INDUSTRY. ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE US AND BELGIUM DO NOT SEEM TO BE NEGATIVE AT THIS POINT;

THE BELGIAN AND AMERICAN ROLES IN THE INTERVENTION ARE SEEN AS

ESSENTIALLY HUMANITARIAN. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE BELGIANS ARE SAID TO HAVE ORIGINALLY WANTED TO: (A) NEGOTIATE WITH THE KATANGANS, OR (B)

SEND IN THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS TO EFFECT THE EVACUATION. ADDITIONALLY, THE BELGIAN PRESENCE IN KOLWEZI IS EXPECTED TO BE A SHORT ONE. AS FOR THE U.S., THE EVACUATION OF CIS PERSONNEL EARLY IN THE WEEK (WHICH IS WIDELY KNOWN IN KINSHASA) "PROVES" THAT THE AMERICANS WISHED ONLY TO GET THEIR PEOPLE OUT SAFELY.

D. OVERALL, KINSHASA SEEMS TO BE SUFFERING FROM A SECOND YEAR OF FRUSTRATED HOPES AS MOBUTU CLINGS TO POWER. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS A SENSE OF DREADFUL EXPECTATION IN THE AIR THAT THE EVENTS WHICH BEGAN IN KOLWEZI HAVE YET TO SEE THEIR END.

5. PRESS GUIDANCE. NO CHANGE.
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6. DOMESTIC PRESS COVERAGE -- MONDAY MAY 22, P.M.

A. THE DOMESTIC PRESS CONTINUES TO USE REPORTS FROM FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS, IN PLACE OF ITS OWN CORRESPONDENTS' REPORTS. IN SOME

CASES THIS APPEARS TO BE BECAUSE THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS WERE THE FIRST ALLOWED INTO KOLWEZI, IN OTHER CASES TO LEND CREDENCE AND PRESTIGE TO THE REPORTING.

B. THE CARNAGE THAT HAS BEEN FOUND IN KOLWEZI IS BEING HEAVILY REPORTED, ALONG WITH EXTENSIVE CONDEMNATION, SOMEWHAT SHORT ON CORROBATING EVIDENCE, OF ALGERIAN, LIBYAN, CUBAN AND SOVIET INTERVENTION. TELEVISION AND RADIO INTERVIEWS OF DEPARTING EVACUEES CONSUME AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF BROADCAST TIME, AND ARE NOT IN THE LEAST BIT SHORT ON GRUESOME DETAILS.

C. TWO NOTEWORTHY INCLUSIONS IN SUNDAY'S AND MONDAY'S REPORTING WERE: A REPORT THAT GECAMINES REPRESENTATIVE RENARD, UNLIKE HIS FELLOW COUNTRYMAN FOREIGN MINISTER SIMONET, IS SURE THAT WERE CUBANS IN KOLWEZI -- HE SAW THEM WITH HIS OWN EYES. SECONDLY, THE STUMBLING BLOCK THAT GOZ ARREARAGES PRESENTED TO SPEED-UP FMS DELIVERIES WERE ALSO REPORTED IN THE WRITTEN PRESS (KINSHASA 5204).

D. BOTH ELIMA AND SALONGO MAY 23 CONTINUES THEIR ATTACKS ON BELGIAN FOM MINISTER SIMONET. ELIMA MAY 23 HEADLINES THAT "ALL CONTACTS OF ZAIRIAN DIPLOMATS WITH SIMONET ARE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE." ARTICLES QUESTION WHETHER SIMONET'S STATESMENTS REPRESENT ACCURATELY POLICY OF KING AND PRIME MINISTER. CUTLER UNQUOTE VANCE

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